



Governor's Office of Minority Affairs PATHWAY TO STATE PROCUREMENT

Determine If the State of Maryland Buys What You Sell

Buying is done at the agency level. There are 70 agencies/departments participating in the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program and they all buy different goods and services. The best way to identify which agencies buy what you sell is to become a registered vendor on eMarylandMarketplace, the State's online procurement portal. Vendors register for free and receive email notifications of bid solicitations posted by State agencies as well as those posted by county and city buyers.

www.emarylandmarketplace.com

Forecasting reports are available on the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs' website. These reports can also help identify potential opportunities.

www.goma.maryland.gov

Join the Small Business Reserve Program

Maryland operates a special procurement program just for small business. The Small Business Reserve Program (SBR) is a race- and gender-neutral program that requires 23 designated State agencies to direct 10 percent of their spending with SBR firms. This is an opportunity to perform as a prime contractor, so every small business owner should join the SBR. Vendors must meet established criteria and enroll through eMarylandMarketplace. First-time registrants are prompted through the process. If you are already registered in eMarylandMarketplace, but are not in the SBR, contact the Help Desk at 410-767-1492 for special instructions.

www.emarylandmarketplace.com

Consider Seeking MBE Certification

Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program provides opportunities for small minority- and women-owned firms to participate in state contracting and procurement. While certification is not required, only certified MBE firms can meet the specific MBE goal set on a state-funded contract. Our statewide MBE participation goal is 29 percent. The Office of Minority Business Enterprise, housed within the Maryland Department of Transportation, is the State's official certification agency. To determine if you meet the program's eligibility standards, visit their website or attend one of their free monthly workshops to gain valuable information about the application process.

www.mdot.maryland.gov (MBE tab)

Learn the Rules of State Procurement

Maryland is currently modernizing its procurement systems and recently launched a new website to serve as a comprehensive communications portal with access to Maryland procurement information for all policymakers, vendors, and citizens.

www.procurement.maryland.gov

Get familiar with the purchasing process and the rules governing procurement by reading through the Annotated Code of Maryland (State Finance & Procurement Article 14) and COMAR Title 21.

www.dsd.state.md.us

Get Help

Make sure your business is well positioned to participate on government contracts. Tap into the many free and/or low-cost resources available to small business owners like financing and loan programs, skills training, business development, and much more. Visit the resource section of the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs' website to learn more.

www.goma.maryland.gov

Market Your Business

Traditional marketing, business development, and sales strategies always apply. This is particularly true when leveraging your MBE certification as a subcontractor. Distribute your one-page capabilities statement to prime contractors, maintain your website and collateral print materials, engage in social media, and never leave the office without a pocket full of business cards. The Internet offers a broad spectrum of ideas and strategies for marketing a small business. Be sure to check out the Maryland Department of Commerce's business to government webpage and the U.S. Small Business Administration's online learning center.

www.commerce.maryland.gov
www.sba.gov

Put Yourself in Front of Your Customers

The opportunity to meet face-to-face and shake hands with a potential customer is priceless. Attend pre-bid meetings frequently (date, time, and location will be noted in the solicitation) to connect with prime contractors as well as agency buyers. Attend outreach events and procurement fairs, particularly when your potential customers are participating as an exhibitor or vendor. Becoming an active member of social and/or professional organizations is also a great way to connect with high-level business leaders. Visit the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs' online event calendar to see what events are happening in your area.

www.goma.maryland.gov

Stick With It

Developing new business in any market takes a lot of hard work. Be prepared to invest 9 to 12 months into building a new relationship before winning any work. Persistence and repeated contacts with your potential customers will pay off in the long run, so don't give up.

For more information, visit www.goma.maryland.gov